

# EDUC 790: Pluralism for Educators

## Fall 2023

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### Asynchronous

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## What is this course about?

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### Extended Description

This course is designed to expose you to issues and concepts of diversity in education and other human service fields. Activities and assignments in this course are intended to help you broaden and deepen your understanding of issues impacting the lives of school-aged students from a variety of backgrounds, and to build self-awareness skills. Most of the examples used in this course are framed for educators, but the issues and concepts are applicable to almost all areas of work and citizenship.

This course is founded on the assumption that there is injustice in the world and that inequities exist. At times throughout this course, you may feel that your values and beliefs conflict with others in the class or with other readings. However, I'll remind you that experts like Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky who would say that learning takes place most when we willing and able to stretch outside our comfort zone to try to understand something new and different. Or, the tl;dr version: **Learning is change, and change is (sometimes very) hard.**

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## What questions am I trying to answer by taking this course?

- What knowledge and understanding will help us create safe, welcoming spaces?
- What dispositions will help us create safe, welcoming spaces? How do we nurture those dispositions in ourselves and others?
- What skills and strategies will help us create safe, welcoming spaces?

## What am I going to learn to do this semester?

### Learning Outcomes

If you bring sufficient ability and apply reasonable effort to this course, by the end of the course, you will be able to:

1. Articulate the power you have as a teacher to change individuals and society
2. Explain how race, gender, and other differences continue to impact students, learning, and beyond
3. Generate specific strategies for addressing inequity through teaching.

This is the **central enduring understanding** I want you to develop:

*Educators have both an ethical and a pragmatic duty to honor difference. Therefore, we must create spaces that are safe and welcoming, in which every student can succeed. Such spaces seldom "just happen." Rather, they take planning, strategies, and dispositions. Essential dispositions include self-honesty, humility, and an openness to new ideas and experiences.*

### Aligned TASC Model Core Teaching Standards:

2. **Learning Differences.** The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.

3. **Learning Environments.** The teacher works with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

## What book do I have to get?

*We'll be reading the following mass-market paperbacks in class, all of which are widely available via online booksellers and through the UWSP/UW System library. I've notated the ones that are also available as eBooks through the UWSP library, if you prefer to read that way (I don't, but you do you!). It does not matter which 'editions' you get—they are similar enough that you should get the version you want/find most affordable.*

- *Teaching to Transgress* by bell hooks ([eBook available through the library](#))
- *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria? And Other Conversations about Race* by Beverly Daniel Tatum ([eBook available through the library](#))
- *Whistling Vivaldi: How Stereotypes Affect Us and What We Can Do* by Claude M. Steele
- *Grading for Equity: What It Is, Why It Matters, and How It Can Transform Schools and Classrooms* by Joe Feldman ([eBook available through the library](#))
- *Bandwidth Recovery for Schools* by Cia Verschelden

## How am I going to be graded?

Before I answer that question, I want you to know that I don't expect that you will always change your views on the world based on what you learn in a course like this. I do expect that you will respect the contributions and experiences of others, and that you will attempt to perceive the world through others' perspectives and experiences using the frameworks and analytical skills that we learn in this class.

The [Course Schedule](#) contains major content and activities for this course. Here are brief descriptions of the major assignments. Canvas has detailed rubrics and directions which you should read before starting an assignment.

- **Participation in Discussion (11 Points)**
- **Multi-Part project (65 Points)**
  - **Parts 1A and 1B: Literature Review: 20 Points**
  - **Classroom Strategy Draft/Peer Review: 10 Points**
  - **Classroom Strategy Final: 20 Points**
  - **Final Reflection: 15 Points**

## Participation

This class is based on the educational premise that knowledge is constructed through an (inter)active process rather than absorbed passively. Therefore, the format for the course will be a combination of lecture, discussion, and activities, with an emphasis on dialogue and sharing of perspectives. **It is expected that you will be an active and informed participant in all class discussions and activities, and that you will have read assigned texts by the dates indicated on the syllabus.** All students are expected to engage in respectful intellectual dialogue in the discussion, thus you will need to be self-reflective about your own identities and how you may be

responsible for reproducing privilege in your work and in relations with your peers. Finally, some of the material covered will be particularly sensitive to some students. We all take a responsibility in creating and maintaining a safe/brave space for every student, so we will treat material shared in the classroom as **confidential**.

## What happens if I turn in an assignment late?

All assignments are due on the dates designated in the syllabus. If you make arrangements with me ahead of time, I will likely agree to accept a late assignment. If prior arrangements have not been made, you may receive a lowered grade (one whole letter grade or 10% per day) for that assignment.

## How will I know what my letter grade is?

This course uses the standard UWSP grading system. Your grade is based on how many points you earned (X), divided by how points you could have earned (Y). Based on that simple division ( $X \div Y$ ), I will assign your final grade:

94 – 100% = A	77 – 79% = C+	60 – 63% = D-
90 – 93% = A-	74 – 76% = C	< 60% = F
87 – 89% = B+	70 – 73% = C-	
84 – 86% = B	67 – 69% = D+	
80 – 83% = B-	64 – 66% = D	

I reserve the right to bump a grade up (especially if it's close) based on my professional judgment. I will never bump a grade down. I don't give extra credit.

In all Early Childhood Education and Education undergraduate courses, students must receive a C- or better as a requirement for teacher certification. Failure to earn a C- or higher will result in the student needing to repeat the course.

Grade disputes on individual assignments cannot be made until **24 hours after a grade is received** and must begin with a written request and justification for a grade change.

## I need to talk to you about something. How do I get in contact with you?

### Contact Information



**EMAIL** is the quickest way to reach me at: [lindsay.bernhagen@uwsp.edu](mailto:lindsay.bernhagen@uwsp.edu)



**CALL/TEXT in case of emergency** 715-316-3308. Leave a voicemail if I do not answer.



**ZOOM** is available by request

### Office hours

Because I have another position, my schedule varies widely from week-to-week. For that reason, office hours are by appointment/at your convenience. Isn't that accommodating of me? You're welcome! ;) If you want to stop

by to see if I'm in the office, feel free to do so. If I'm here, my door is open! Individual meetings can be arranged through an email request, phone call, or conversation directly before or after class.

## What do you expect in terms of dispositions & conduct?

### Professionalism

I view my students as pre-professionals or current professionals. Your conduct in this course should demonstrate your qualifications for professional responsibilities (e.g., teaching and guiding young people). I will treat you as a professional, and I expect you to demonstrate your qualifications in many ways.

I especially encourage you to consider your professional presence and tone. This includes both face-to-face and online interactions with me and with your peers. For example, if you're teaching or presenting in a face-to-face class, I encourage you to have a professional appearance (e.g., business casual clothing). As another example, when composing an email, I encourage you to include a salutation (e.g., "Dear Dr. Bernhagen"), complete sentences with correct conventions (e.g., spelling), and a signature (e.g., "Sincerely, Ima Student").

As a teacher, I align my policies and choices with my department's expectations. The School of Education has adopted [a model of the dispositions](#) we expect from our students and graduates. I don't expect you to be at the final "Mastering" level in your dispositions. Instead, I offer this model for your own self-evaluation and goal-setting.

### Inclusivity Statement

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that the students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender identity, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, nationality, religion, and culture. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally, or for other students or student groups.

## I have a special circumstance. What policies and resources are in place to help me?

### Absences due to Military Service

You will not be penalized for class absence due to unavoidable or legitimate required military obligations, or medical appointments at a VA facility, not to exceed two (2) weeks unless special permission is granted by the instructor. You are responsible for notifying faculty members of such circumstances as far in advance as possible and for providing documentation to the Office of the Dean of Students to verify the reason for the absence. The faculty member is responsible to provide reasonable accommodations or opportunities to make up exams or other course assignments that have an impact on the course grade. For absences due to being deployed for active duty, please refer to the [Military Call-Up Instructions for Students](#).

### Religious Beliefs Accommodation

It is UW System policy to reasonably accommodate your sincerely held religious beliefs with respect to all examinations and other academic requirements.

You will be permitted to make up an exam or other academic requirement at another time or by an alternative method, without any prejudicial effect, if:

- There is a scheduling conflict between your sincerely held religious beliefs and taking the exam or meeting the academic requirements; and
- You have notified your instructor within the first three weeks of the beginning of classes (first week of summer or interim courses) of the specific days or dates that you will request relief from an examination or academic requirement.
- Your instructor will accept the sincerity of your religious beliefs at face value and keep your request confidential.
- Your instructor will schedule a make-up exam or requirement before or after the regularly scheduled exam or requirement.
- You may file any complaints regarding compliance with this policy in the Equity and Affirmative Action Office.

### Equal Access for Students with Disabilities

UW-Stevens Point will modify academic program requirements as necessary to ensure that they do not discriminate against qualified applicants or students with disabilities. The modifications should not affect the substance of educational programs or compromise academic standards; nor should they intrude upon academic freedom. Examinations or other procedures used for evaluating students' academic achievements may be adapted. The results of such evaluation must demonstrate the student's achievement in the academic activity, rather than describe his/her disability.

*If modifications are required due to a disability, please inform me and contact the Disability and Assistive Technology Center to complete an Accommodations Request form. Phone: 346-3365 or Room 609 Albertson Hall.*

### Cool, I want to do well in this class, but none of that helps me. What else is available?

- **Me!:** Please feel free to contact me at any time over the course of the semester regarding papers, concerns, observations, etc. I want you to *always* see me if you are having difficulty with an assignment or class material. I will do everything in my power to make this course work for you, as long as I can do so in a way that is fair to other students in the course. Email is generally the most efficient way to get in contact with me and I diligently aim for a maximum of 24-hrs. turnaround time in response to emails, unless I explain otherwise in class.
- **Taking care of yourself:** A recent American College Health Survey found stress, sleep problems, anxiety, depression, interpersonal concerns, death of a significant other, and alcohol use among the top ten health impediments to academic performance. Students experiencing personal problems or situational crises during the semester are encouraged to contact the [UWSP Counseling Center](#) for assistance, support and advocacy. This service is free and confidential.
- **Dr. Fernholz:** In a School of Education course, if you have concerns about the instructor you have the right to communicate with the Associate Dean: Lynda Fernholz, (lfernhol@uwsp.edu, 715-346-3223).

Tutoring	Advising	Safety and General Support	Health
Tutoring and Learning Center helps with Study Skills, Writing, Technology, Math, &	Academic and Career Advising Center, 209 CCC, ext 3226	Dean of Students Office, 212 Old Main, ext. 2611	Counseling Center, Delzell Hall, ext. 3553. Health Care, Delzell Hall, ext. 4646

## UWSP Service Desk

The Office of Information Technology (IT) provides a Service Desk to assist students with connecting to the Campus Network, virus and spyware removal, file recovery, equipment loan, and computer repair. You can contact the Service Desk via email at [techhelp@uwsp.edu](mailto:techhelp@uwsp.edu) or at (715) 346-4357 (HELP) or visit this [link for more information](#).

## Shouldn't there be something in here about plagiarism?

There should! It's required. I have a lot of experience engaging with violations of academic misconduct policies. I recognize that the rules regarding academic misconduct can sometimes be confusing for students with respect to specific assignments or course work. If you have questions, I encourage you to come and see me. **I am always willing and prepared to help clarify any aspects of the work for this course that may be confusing.** If you have questions or concerns about a particular assignment, you should talk with me before the assignment is submitted. Ignorance or misunderstanding of the UW System policy will not serve as a valid excuse for academic misconduct. Here's the policy, for your reference:

### *UWSP 14.01 Statement of Principles*

The board of regents, administrators, faculty, academic staff and students of the University of Wisconsin system believe that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental to the mission of higher education and of the University of Wisconsin system. The university has a responsibility to promote academic honesty and integrity and to develop procedures to deal effectively with instances of academic dishonesty. Students are responsible for the honest completion and representation of their work, for the appropriate citation of sources, and for respect of others' academic endeavors.

To read UWSP's definition of academic misconduct, please consult UWSP 14.03. In short, examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to:

- Cheating on an examination
- Collaborating with others in work to be presented, contrary to the stated rules of the course
- Submitting a paper or assignment as one's own work when a part or all of the paper or assignment is the work of another
- Submitting a paper or assignment that contains ideas or research of others without appropriately identifying the sources of those ideas
- Stealing examinations or course materials
- Submitting, if contrary to the rules of a course, work previously presented in another course
- Tampering with the laboratory experiment or computer program of another student
- Knowingly and intentionally assisting another student in any of the above, including assistance in an arrangement whereby any work, classroom performance, examination or other activity is submitted or performed by a person other than the student under whose name the work is submitted or performed.

Students suspected of academic misconduct will be asked to meet with me to discuss the concerns. If academic misconduct is evident, procedures for determining disciplinary sanctions will be followed as outlined in the [University System Administrative Code, Chapter 14](#). Let's not get to this point, okay? Talk to me before the assignment is due.

## Got it. Now what are we going to be doing day to day?

That's a [separate document](#) so you can easily access the course schedule without having to scroll through all of this other stuff.